March 11, 1944

- CASEY, PRESS PHOTOGRAPHER -

"Man Overboard!"

by

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Script No. 345

CUE: COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM
(..... 30 seconds .....)

CASEY: (COLD) Face the camera, please...hold it!

SOUND: FLASH BULB & SHUTTER CLICK

CASEY: Thanks. (FADING) You'll see it in the Morning Express.

ANNC'R: Columbia brings you another adventure of CASEY, PRESS PHOTOGRAPHER. Tonight, and every Saturday night at this time, Columbia invites you to follow Casey on his exciting assignments and to meet the strangely assorted people who pass in swift-moving parade before the shutters of his camera. Tonight— (ORGAN EFFECT) —"Man Overboard!"

MUSIC: OVERTURE TO DRAMA...SET & UNDER. AT * FADE IN DANCE MUSIC & HOLD OFF UNTIL CUE

~~MUSIC~~ ~~MARKED~~ ~~MAX TO MAX~~ ~~SET MAX UNDER~~

ANNC'R: National City has a very swanky Yacht Club. And tonight the wide windows of its sprawling, many winged club house are ablaze with light...light that is softly reflected on the smooth surface of a boat-dotted basin that, through a narrow passage only a mile away, joins the turbulent waters of the open sea. (*) A dance is in progress at the Yacht Club...a dance of such social importance that Casey has been assigned to cover it. In the huge library adjoining the ballroom, (FADING) he is completing his work with a group photograph of the club's officers——

SOUND: DISTANT LAUGHTER & MURMUR OF THE DANCERS

CASEY: I'd like you to be in the center for this shot, Commodore Drake...will you change places with the gentleman on your right?

MAN: (WITH MOCK GRUFFNESS...HALF OFF) Get in here where you belong, Tom!

2nd MAN: (HALF OFF...LAUGHING) Poor Drake's been in the middle ever since we elected him Commodore of this club...now he's trying to shirk his responsibilities.

DRAKE: (GENIAL, CULTURED, MIDDLE-AGED...HALF OFF, LAUGHING) Alright, alright!— I suppose we need a good looking man in the center of this picture. (GENERAL CHUCKLES & AD LIB BANTER) Is this the way you want us, Mr. Casey?

CASEY: Just close in a little, if you will...all of you— closer together. (CHUCKLES) Now look happy.

MAN: We'll try.

CASEY: That's it. Now...hold it.

SOUND: (PAUSE, THEN FLASH BULB & SHUTTER CLICK

CASEY: Thanks.

2nd MAN: It didn't hurt a bit.

3rd MAN: Mr. Casey is a painless photographer.

CASEY: Well, I think this finishes us up.

DRAKE: (FADING ON) You've got all the pictures you want now?

CASEY: Almost a plate-case full, Commodore. all I'll need

DRAKE: Then how about turning from business to pleasure and having a drink with me?

CASEY: I never say "no" to that kind of a proposition.

DRAKE: (CHUCKLES) The rest of you fellows go back and dance with your wives...Mr. Casey and I have a date at the bar.

MEN: (AD LIB) We may join you there later. It's been nice to meet you, Mr. Casey. Thanks for the trouble you've taken with us.

CASEY: It's been a pleasure.

MEN: (FADING) So long. See you later, etc.

CASEY: So long. Nice bunch of people you have here, Commodore.

DRAKE: They are a nice crowd. (CHUCKLES) Not a very exciting one for a newspaper man who gets around as you do— our membership is often accused of being the "stodgy, conservative type"...but we're proud of the fact that nothing much ever happens around here, Mr. Casey, except an all-around good time.

SOUND: PISTOL SHOT...DISTANT, REVERBERATING OVER WATER...REPEAT AT *

DRAKE: (STARTLED) What was that??

CASEY: Sounded like a pistol shot! (*)

DRAKE: There's another!

CASEY: (TENSE) From outside...from the water!

DRAKE: Here's a door...let's—

SOUND: DOOR THROWN OPEN...THE LAPPING OF SEMI-DISTANT WATER IS HEARD FOR AN INSTANT (HOLD THIS EFFECT UNDER)...THEN TWO MORE SHOTS, HEARD MORE CLEARLY THAN BEFORE

CASEY: Commodore— those shots were fired on the boat that's lighted up out there...I saw the flashes!!

DRAKE: That's Charlie Bob Jarvis Dilwell's schooner!

CASEY: It's too far away to be sure, but— it looks as though two men were fighting on that deck!

DRAKE: Yes! One is lifting the other to the rail—!!

SOUND: VERY DISTANT SPLASH...TWO QUICK PISTOL SHOTS AT *

CASEY: He's thrown him overboard!!

BONNIE: (TWO SCREAMS...VERY DISTANT)

DRAKE: A woman is/screaming out there!! (*)

CASEY: Two more shots!!

DRAKE: What's happening???

CASEY: That's something I want to find out!!

SOUND: DOORS THROWN OPEN AT VARYING DISTANCES COINCIDENT WITH:

VOICES: (MEN & WOMEN...EACH DISTINCT & RAPID— FADING ON:) What's going on out here?? Commodore, we heard shots! I saw a man

VOICES (cont'd): thrown—! And a woman screamed—! What—??

DRAKE: (TOPPING) Quiet,please!! (RAPIDLY) I dont know any more than you do...but we've got to get out to Charlie Dilwell's schooner! Joe— Doc— Henry!— we'll take the tender at the dock...(SLIGHT FADE)...come on!!

MEN (3): (QUICK AD LIB) Yes! Okay! We're with you,Commodore!

CASEY: And Casey's included in this investigation party!!

SOUND: RUNNING FEET ON HARD TURF,THEN ON SANDY BEACH...HOLD UNDER

BONNIE: (DISTANT...SCREAMS:) Help...help—!!!

DRAKE: (RUNNING) Casey— that woman again!!

CASEY: (RUNNING) I see her,Commodore...she's in a little boat near the schooner— coming this way!

MAN: (RUNNING) That's a fast sea sled she's got...she'll be at the dock by the time we get there!

BONNIE: (A LITTLE CLOSER...FRANTIC:) Help—!!

DRAKE: (PROJECTS:) We're coming,girl...we're coming!!

2nd MAN: Commodore— that girl is Bonnie Jarson!

DRAKE: The girl who's engaged to Dilwell?

2nd MAN: Yes!

DRAKE: Does anyone know who the men were on that schooner?

3rd MAN: (RUNNING,BREATHLESS) I saw Dilwell and his partner start out there in a skiff awhile ago.

DRAKE: (BREATHLESS NOW,BUT RAPID) Dilwell and Ashton?

3rd MAN: Yes,Hal Ashton!

SOUND: FADE IN APPROACHING MOTOR OF SEA-SLED (DO NOT BRING TO MIKE) ...CUT AT *. BRING LAPPING WATER EFFECT CLOSER DURING THE PRECEDING RUNNING EFFECT & NOW BRING FOOTSTEPS ONTO WOODEN DOCK—

CASEY: The girl's pulling into the dock!

DRAKE: Start the motor on that tender,Doc,while I see what she can tell us!

SOUND: CUT FOOTSTEPS ON DOCK EXCEPT THOSE OF TWO MEN & CUT THESE AT *...CUT SEA SLED MOTOR NOW

DRAKE: Miss Jarson— it's Commodore Drake! What—??

BONNIE: (ABOUT 25;A GAL FROM THE SOUTH...OFF,FADING ON,HYSTERICALLY: He threw him overboard,Commodore...then shot him— killed him!

CASEY: Who shot who?? (*)

BONNIE: Hal Ashton!— he's killed Charlie!

DRAKE: Ashton— killed Dilwell???

BONNIE: (SOBBING,BUT RAPIDLY) They left me and went out to the schooner together about half an hour ago— they said they had some important business to attend to...I got tired of waiting for Charlie to come back,so I started out there. Just as I reached the schooner,I heard shots...then I saw a man thrown over the rail and heard two more shots! I saw blood on the water...and the body of a man— sinking! It was Charlie's body!

DRAKE: Ashton threw him overboard,then shot him??

BONNIE: Yes.

MAN: (HALF OFF...BIG) We cant start the tender,Commodore!!— someone's cut the ignition wires!

DRAKE: Cut the ignition—??

CASEY: That schooner out there— it's moving!!!

2nd MAN: It's getting under way!!

DRAKE: Ashton's started its auxiliary engine...he's trying to make his escape!!

CASEY: We can head him off in the boat this girl was using!!

DRAKE: It wont hold all of us!

CASEY: It'll hold you and me and this camera,Commodore...and that's enough!!

SOUND: SEA SLED MOTOR ROARS INTO ACTION

CASEY: Come on...let's go!!

MUSIC: BRIDGE

SOUND: THE SEA SLED MOTOR AND HEAVY SPRAY...HOLD UNDER

DRAKE: (RAPID,FEARFUL) Casey,you sav you haven't a gun...and I haven't one!— the man on that schooner is armed and desperate...he's just committed a cold-blooded murder—!

CASEY: We'll worry about our chances when we overhaul him...and we're doing that fast! This is a sweet little boat,Commodore.

DRAKE: How can you take things so calmly??

CASEY: (DRYLY) I'm a newspaper mug. (SLIGHT PAUSE,CHANGE OF TONE) Who is this Ashton...and the guy he threw overboard,then shot for good measure?

DRAKE: (AGITATED) Hal Ashton and Dilwell were business partners— and good friends,I've always thought. Ashton is the last man in the world you'd think would commit a murder...around the club,we've always considered him— well,just a- a good looking ladies' man.

CASEY: A wolf...or a sap?

DRAKE: Why— about half of each.

CASEY: That adds up to— either dog or fox. How about Dilwell?

DRAKE: He was a tough,hot tempered fellow...but the sort you could depend on. I cant believe he's dead.

CASEY: You say that girl back there was engaged to Dilwell?

DRAKE: Yes. She's a Virginia girl— of very good family,I understand...she and Charlie were very devoted.

CASEY: (SYMPATHETICALLY) This is tough for her.

DRAKE: Yes.

CASEY: (PAUSE) Funny about the ignition on that tender being cut just when you wanted to use it.

DRAKE: Very funny. It looks as though this murder was planned in advance,Casey. Ashton knows the customs of this club... since the war began and private boats have been forbidden to

DRAKE: (cont'd) cruise in coastal waters after sundown, that tender is the only large motor boat kept in readiness for emergencies. Because it couldn't move, that schooner couldn't be followed quickly...(UNCOMFORTABLY) Except by a few men—like you and me.

CASEY: Yeah. (PAUSE...PUZZLED) Say— the schooner's slowing down.

DRAKE: (FEARFULLY) Ashton knows we're after him...he's got a gun—he's going to wait until we come up and—

CASEY: Keep your head down...we'll see.

DRAKE: What can we do if he—?

CASEY: (PUZZLED) He's not just slowing down...he's stopping. He's putting that auxiliary engine into reverse— or whatever you do to bring a boat up short.

DRAKE: (PUZZLED) Yes. (FEARFUL AGAIN) We'll be under his side in a minute.

CASEY: Less than that. I'm cutting our engine...I know this kind of baby-boat.

SOUND: SEA-SLED ENGINE CUT...the churning of water for a moment, THEN FADE OUT TO A GENTLE LAPPING

DRAKE: (LOW, AFRAID) He's coming to the stern...Ashton.

DILWELL: (A CULTURED MAN OF ABOUT 40...OFF, DOURLY) Alright, gentlemen...I'm heaving to.

DRAKE: That's not Ashton.

CASEY: Huh?

DILWELL: (FADE IN TO HALF-OFF) I'll cast you a line so you can come aboard.

DRAKE: (LOW, PUZZLED) Casey— that's Dilwell's voice.

CASEY: Dilwell??

DILWELL: (FADING ON) Come along-side for the line.

DRAKE: (ALOUD) Charlie--!

DILWELL: Oh, it's you, Commodore. This moonlight isn't bright enough to make out faces until they come quite close. Here's the line...catch. (WANLY) Come aboard and take me back...to the law.

SOUND: VERY BRIEF EFFECT OF SCRAMBLING ABOARD UNDER:

DRAKE: Charlie...I dont understand—

DILWELL: It's simple enough...I threw Ashton over the side after he'd tried to shoot me. Then I heard Bonnie screaming under my bow— I dont know how she got there. Ashton's head bobbed up, then went out of sight for good and— well, I'd never drowned a man before— I got panicky and started the Deisel...I wanted to run and hide. Then, I saw you overhauling me and realized I was acting like a lunatic. I'll go back with you without any trouble.

DRAKE: But Miss Jarson said Ashton threw you—

CASEY: It's pretty dark out here, Commodore— you can see figures, but not faces. You'd better give me your gun before we start back, Mr. Dilwell.

DILWELL: I haven't any gun. And who are you?

CASEY: Just a press photographer. (GRIMLY) And I want the gun you shot your partner with before you threw him in the drink...~~and afterward.~~ I want it before I relax and take me some pictures.

DILWELL: I haven't any gun...Ashton did the only shooting here tonight.

CASEY: (VERY SCEPTICALLY) Sure— he fired a couple shots at you after he went over the rail...while he was in the water.

DILWELL: He did...he must have!— I've never held a gun in my hand tonight. Search me, if you like.

CASEY: Thanks, I will. (BIZ) It's not on you, so I guess you threw it overboard.

DILWELL: I tell you I had no gun! (MISERABLY) I threw Ashton in the water— I saw him sink— I'm responsible for his death...but I acted in self defense! You've got to believe that!

CASEY: Do you mind telling us the whole story...your version of it?

DILWELL: I—

DRAKE: Wait,Charlie!— before you say anything more,you must realize that any statements you make to Mr.Casey and me may be used against you.

DILWELL: The truth cant harm me,Commodore...the truth proves that I had to act as I did. (SLIGHT PAUSE) Ashton found me in the club about forty minutes ago and said he had to discuss a very urgent matter— something that had come up at our office after I left this afternoon. He wanted complete privacy,which was impossible at the club house tonight, so he suggested we take his launch and come out here. I told Bonnie— Miss Jarson where we were going and went with him. He— he seemed very nervous and upset. We went down in the cabin when we got here and I made him a drink...then he talked at random for awhile— he seemed to be stalling...then,suddenly,he accused me of embezzling partnership funds. It was a ridiculous accusation!— I told him he was either drunk or crazy. Then he pulled a gun and fired at me.

CASEY: This happened in the cabin below?

DILWELL: Yes.

CASEY: (SLIGHT FADE) Hmm...looks like a pretty small place from here. (FADING ON) He must have been within a few feet of you...yet he missed.

DILWELL: His next shots wouldn't have missed if I hadn't grappled with him. I tried to take the gun away from him...we struggled up here to the deck...I finally got him off balance at the rail...he went over and— that's all.

CASEY: (DRYLY) Except for those shots that were fired afterwards.

DILWELL: (WEARILY) He had the only gun...I didn't fire them.

CASEY: (SARCASTICALLY) If a couple bullets are found in his body when it's pulled out of the water, I suppose you'll claim he put em there himself.

DILWELL: I've told you the truth...I cant tell you anything more.

CASEY: I see several fresh looking blood spots on this deck... you dont seem to be injured in any way.

DILWELL: Ashton broke the highball glass I gave him and cut his hand.

CASEY: Humph. Commodore, do you know if Ashton could swim?

DRAKE: I— Yes, he was a good swimmer.

CASEY: ~~But~~ he wasn't given a chance to do any swimming. You'd better think up some better explanations before you tell your story to the cops, Mr. Dilwell...and, after I shoot a few pictures here, we're going back and let you meet the cops.

MUSIC: BRIDGE:

SOUND: BAR ROOM EFFECTS...PIANO BEHIND

CASEY: (SLIGHT PROJECTION) A little rye, Ethelbert, and a tall one for Miss Williams.

ETH: (OFF, FADING ON) Well— Casey! Hello, Miss Williams.

ANN: Hi, Ethelbert.

ETH: Say— I been hearin' about the swell scoop you got at the Yacht Club last night, Casey...they tell me your's was the only morning paper in town that had that murder story— plus a whole page of pictures.

CASEY: (THOUGHTFUL & RATHER GLUM) Yeah.

ETH: You dont seem very happy about it.

ANN: The boy friend has been going around with a long face ever since he came to work today.

CASEY: That guy, Dilwell, bothers me, Ann. The cops pounded at him pretty hard, but he didn't make any changes in that goofy story he told me on the boat...finally, it began to sound to me like the truth.

ANN: Casey— dont start getting a crazy notion that the man didn't commit a cold-blooded murder that you witnessed yourself!

CASEY: I was a very distant witness, Ann...and some parts of this case dont fit together. For instance: Why were the ignition wires cut on that tender?— it didn't prevent the Commodore and me from following the schooner in another boat...and Dilwell stopped when he saw us coming.

ANN: But he'd started to run away, which proves his guilt...he stopped because he suddenly realized escape was impossible.

ETH: From what I read in the paper, Casey, I think the guy is plain stoopid. How could he expect to get away with his yarn of self-defense after firin' two shots at a fella who was helpless in the water?

CASEY: That— and other things -makes Dilwell seem <u>too</u> stupid, Ethelbert.

ETH: Have they recovered the other guys body yet?

CASEY: They hadn't an hour ago, and they started searching for it last night. (SLIGHT PAUSE) Give me us those drinks...then I'm going to drop in on Lieutenant Logan and see if there've been any new developments.

ETH: A crazy notion <u>is</u> percolatin' in Casey'd head, Miss Williams

(CONT'D)

ETH: (cont'd) ...and as my sister, Edna, say about a centipede with fallen arches— quote: "the only way to cure that kinda trouble is to bounce a hammer on it who has it" —unquote.

MUSIC: BRIDGE

LOGAN: No, we haven't brought up Ashton's body yet, Cassy...and it may be some time before we do— there are strong currents in that basin that may have carried it out to sea.

CASEY: Then you may never find it, Logan.

LOGAN: That's possible.

CASEY: Dilwell cant be convicted unless you can produce the body and proof of death.

LOGAN: Not of murder in the first, perhaps with the death penalty attached— which is what he deserves. But we have Miss Jarson's statement that she saw the victim helplessly sinking after those last two shots; Dilwell himself admits that Ashton sank; and plenty of people at the club saw the man thrown overboard and heard the shots...the D.A. can nail Dilwell for a long, long term on that kind of evidence— backed up by proof of his real motive.

CASEY: What do you mean— "real motive"?

LOGAN: We've just found out that over $100,000 has been embezzled from the Dilwell-Ashton firm...only one of the partners could have done it— and it was Dilwell, of course. Ashton got wise, accused him, and Dilwell killed him in order to cover up.

CASEY: But, instead of covering up, he told us that Ashton accused him of embezzlement...Dilwell practically told you to look for what you've found!

LOGAN: He figured we'd find out, anyway...and he'll claim that Ashton was the thief.

CASEY: Hmm. (PAUSE) Logan,why didn't he kill Ashton with the first shot he fired in that tiny cabin...if he had the gun?

LOGAN: Dilwell planned a self-defense yarn...he fired several shots in order to attract attention at the clubhouse...he wanted to be seen struggling with Ashton on that lighted deck.

CASEY: Then,when he's attracted those witnesses— after Ashton goes over the rail,he fires two more shots. That doesn't make sense.

LOGAN: He lost his head...even his fiancée admits he has a crazy temper.

CASEY: (THINKING) And his fiancée first told us it was Dilwell, not Ashton,who was the victim.

LOGAN: It was too dark to make out faces...you've told me that yourself.

CASEY: Yeah...but she was able to see blood on the water,she said. (PAUSE) I didn't see much of her last night— What kind of a gal is she?

LOGAN: Okay. She's from Virginia— good family,I'm told,but not much dough...she's a piano teacher— got acquainted with Dilwell when she gave lessons to his kid daughter...Brit Dilwell's a widower.

CASEY: (PAUSE) Have your divers found the gun that fired those shots?

LOGAN: No...we'll probably have to go after it with a dredge, which'll take some time. We'll need that gun,for it was bullets that killed Ashton...the guy was a good swimmer, Casey;he could have saved himself if he'd had a chance.

CASEY: (SLOWLY) Maybe he did save himself.

LOGAN: Dilwell,himself,says—

CASEY: Wait a minute! (RAPIDLY,THINKING ALOUD) A good swimmer could easily sink out of sight,especially at night,then swim away under water.

LOGAN: Sure...but why—?

CASEY: A $100,000 embezzlement is a good enough reason! (EXCITEDLY) Logan— the parts fit if you put em together this way! Ashton cut the iggition of that tender— not so the schooner couldn't be followed,but so the fastest boat available couldn't leave the dock in time to catch him swimming away. Then he inviegled Dilwell out to the schooner...purposely cut his hand in order to leave a few blood stains;aroused Dilwell's well known "bad temper" and got thrown overboard after attracting attention with these gun shots!

LOGAN: But the two shots after he went over—??

CASEY: He could have fired them from the water...pistol cartridges dont get damp in a matter of seconds!

LOGAN: Miss Jarson says she saw—!

CASEY: (IMPATIENTLY) She didn't know what she saw!— she didn't even know which guy was overboard!

LOGAN: Hmm. (THINKING) Then Ashton does a fade-out,changes his name and appearance,goes to South America maybe and— lives nicely on that hundred grand.

CASEY: Yeah...while Dilwell goes to the pen for a lotta years.and has no chance to pay back the dirty trick that's been played on him!

LOGAN: (PAUSE...SLOWLY) Casey,I think you have something.

CASEY: I know I have,Logan! This is a 22 karat hunch— plus.

SOUND: PHONE RINGS. RECEIVER UNCRADLED AT *...RECRADLED AT **

LOGAN: Excuse me. (*) Lieutenant Logan speaking. (SLIGHT PAUSE) Yes,Sergeant? (PAUSE) They have?? (PAUSE) There's no

(CONT'D)

LOGAN: (cont'd) mistake? (SLIGHT PAUSE) Okay, I'll be right out. (**) (ANGRILY) You and your hunches, Casey—!!

CASEY: What's up?

LOGAN: Ashton's body!— it's just been recovered...with two bullet holes in its head!

MUSIC: BRIDGE

SOUND: BAR ROOM EFFECTS...PIANO BEHIND

ANN: Give Casey a drink, Ethelbert...he's feeling low.

ETH: (FADING ON) Okay, Miss Williams. What's the matter, Casey?

CASEY: (WEARILY) Dont ask me questions, Ethelbert...but if you see Lieutenant Logan coming in, let me know so I can duck out the back door.

ETH: You in the dog house with Logan?

CASEY: I'm in the squirrel cage.

ANN: I still think it was a nice theory you offered him, Casey... it sounded swell ~~when you repeated it~~ to me— until you mentioned they'd found Ashton's body.

CASEY: Even now I cant believe that Dilwell's guilty. I'm goofy, I guess.

ANN: That's a point I wont argue with you.

CASEY: Mmm. (PAUSE...THINKING ALOUD) I saw the gun flashes of the first shots that were fired on that schooner,,,but I didn't see flashes of the last two— (PAUSE) They could have been fired by a gal in a sea sled, which was hidden from shore by the bow of the schooner—

ANN: You mean Miss Jarson may have—?

CASEY: Yes! (RAPIDLY) It was quite a coincidence that she got out to the schooner just as the fight started— just in time to be a star witness. And Dilwell said Ashton "stalled —talked at random" for awhile before he started their

(CONT'D)

CASEY: (cont'd) quarrel and pulled that gun. Maybe he was stalling until Miss Jarson got there.

ANN: Stalling until she could come and shoot him???

CASEY: She thought Dilwell was the man in the water!

ANN: I still cant see—!

CASEY: I cant fit the pieces together myself— yet. But I think she's the key piece. I only got one picture of Miss Bonnie Jarson last night and she covered her face as I snapped it... I'm going out to her apartment now with a camera and— maybe, get better acquainted.

MUSIC: BRIDGE

BONNIE: I'm sorry, Mr. Casey, but I must refuse to let you take any pictures of me...I've let no one take any pictures.

CASEY: My paper wants one very badly, Miss Jarson—

BONNIE: No. It's bad enough yo've spread mah name all over yo' front pages...mah folks down in Virginnie are goin' to be horrified when they read about the awful thing that's happened.

CASEY: You're in no way responsible for what's happened.

BONNIE: Of course I'm not! (EMOTIONALLY) But to be close to such an awful crime— to be a witness to it— to have been engaged to marry the murderer—!

CASEY: You say that in the past tense, Miss Jarson. You— are breaking your engagement to Mr. Dilwell?

BONNIE: Naturally! (ACTING, BUT DOING IT WELL) If there was the teeniest doubt of his guilt, I'd stick by him— to the end. Befo' poor Mr. Ashton's body was found, I even tried to disbelieve the evidence of mah own eyes— to disbelieve what I saw...and what you saw, too, Mr. Casey.

CASEY: I wasn't as close to the scene as you were, Miss Jarson. (PAUSE...ABRUPTLY) Do you swim?

BONNIE: Swim?

CASEY: Uh huh.

BONNIE: Why— yes. Anybody at the Club could tell you I do.

CASEY: Good swimmer?

BONNIE: Yes. (PAUSE) I know what you're thinking, Mr. Casey:— since, at first, I believed it was my fiancé who was in the water, why didn't I make an attempt to rescue him?

CASEY: (PLEASANTLY) That was my thought.

BONNIE: (SIGHS) I knew it was useless after those last two bullets were fired.

CASEY: How could you be sure they'd hit the man in the water— when you couldn't see the man well enough to know who he was?

BONNIE: I—

CASEY: (PAUSE) The lawyers may ask you that question when the case gets to court.

BONNIE: (COLDLY...& THE SOUTHERN DIALECT IS ALMOST ABSENT) I shall be obliged to answer it then...I'm not now. I must ask you to excuse me...I have things to do.

CASEY: Sure. I'm sorry you wont let me take some pictures of you... good looking women usually like to see themselves in the paper.

BONNIE: (HAUGHTILY...WITH THE ACCENT AGAIN) Ladies dont care fo' that sort of publicity.

SOUND: DOOR OPENED...CLOSED AT *

BONNIE: Goodbye, Mr. Casey.

CASEY: So long, Miss Jarson. (*) (SOFTLY, GRIMLY) See you later.

MUSIC: BRIDGE

ANN: So you didn't like Miss Jarson, Casey?

CASEY: Ann, I didn't like her a-tall.

ANN: There must be something wrong with her then...you're usually a sap for a good looking woman.

CASEY: She's not pretty looking when you look at her close...she's got a pair of hard, ice-berg eyes that dont go with her soft Southern talk, which I'm not so sure is on the level. And I dont care for dames who call themselves "ladies"— in italics.

ANN: That doesn't prove she shmk murdered anybody.

CASEY: (WORRIED) I know that. (PAUSE) She's got an awfully swell apartment for an unknown piano teacher...wonder where she gets her dough.

ANN: Maybe her folks have money.

CASEY: Logan says not. (PAUSE, THINKING) It's possible the cops may not be able to trace that hundred grand that was stolen to either Dilwell or Ashton.

ANN: Only one of the partners could have taken it!

CASEY: Ye-ah. (PAUSE) Ann, my hunch says this gal shot the guy who went overboard. Who she thought she was shooting or why she did it, I dont know...but there may be a way of finding out and of nailing her for the job.

ANN: I dont see how.

CASEY: Take a look at this picture.

ANN: It's the one you took of Bonnie Jarson at the club...after you brought Dilwell back.

CASEY: Yes. Her face is covered by her hand— she's one of those camera-shy dames...but it's a swell shot of the dress she wore when the murder was committed.

ANN: Dress?

CASEY: Can you get a copy of this dress made in a hurry— to fit you?

ANN: Yes...but why?

~~CASEY: I'll tell you when you get it. In the meantime, I'm going~~

(CONT'D)

CASEY: I'll tell you when you get it. In the meantime, I'mean to see a lot of Bonnie Jarson...when she's not seeing me.

MUSIC: BRIDGE

CASEY: This dress is swell, Ann...a perfect copy.

ANN: Now will you explain why I've gotten it?

CASEY: You're going to put it on tonight, we're going out to the Yacht Club and I'm going to take a picture of you, seated in that sea sled under the bow of Dilwell's schooner... with a gun in your hand.

ANN: Gun?

CASEY: Pointed at something in the water that'll look very much like a man's head. Then, Annie— I'll do some tricks with the picture. As the result of a little shadowing and second story work, I've sneaked some nice shots of Bonnie Jarson's face that she doesn't know anything about...and her pan will be substituted for your's in the picture.

ANN: What'll that get you?

CASEY: A reaction that'll establish either her guilt or innocence ...and, if she's guilty, it'll get me evidence.

ANN: You're going to show her this faked picture.

CASEY: Oh, no...<u>you</u>'re going to do that.

ANN: I??

CASEY: Sit down, Annie— and take it nice and easy while I tell you my little scheme.

ANN: (UNHAPPILY) This is going to mean trouble for me.

CASEY: (EASILY) What's a little trouble! Bonnie Jarson's never seen you— she doesn't know anything about you. Tomorrow, using the name of— Annie Reilly's a good name! —you'll call her up and make an appointment (FADING) to call at her apartment——

MUSIC: BRIDGE

BONNIE: (COLD,PUZZLED,WORRIED) Come in,Miss Reilly.

ANN: (SHE IS PLAYING A PART NOW & SPEAKS WITH A BROOKLYN WHINE) Thank ya,Miss Jarson.

SOUND: DOOR CLOSED

BONNIE: Now tell me the reason for the mysterious things you said over the telephone.

ANN: I didn't say nothin' mysterious...only that I happened to be on a boat clost to Mr.Dilwell's boat on the night that poor fella was shot.

BONNIE: (TENSE) All the boats near the schooner were dark that night...everyone was in the club house— dancing.

ANN: (CHUCKLES SOFTLY) I wasn't...I aint a member of the club. But the boat I was on was dark...because— well,'tween you and me,I hadn't no right to be on it.

BONNIE: Who are you?

ANN: Oh— just a girl who wants to be a friend of your'n.

BONNIE: (THE SOUTHERN ACCENT BEGINS TO DISAPPEAR...SHARPLY) Talk straight! Talk straight!

ANN: Okay. People keeps nice things on some of them boats— things a gal can get good money for...I was collectin' some of them things.

BONNIE: You're a thief.

ANN: (CHUCKLES) I dont mind that...comin' from <u>you.</u>

BONNIE: What are you driving at??

ANN: I'd just collected a very swell,expensive camera when I heard them shots on Mr.Dilwell's boat...it had one of them flash bulbs attached to it and I thought it'd be nice to take a pitchure.

BONNIE: (PAUSE) Go on.

ANN: By the time I got set,I saw a woman in a little motor boat...and took my pitchure of <u>her</u>.

BONNIE: You're lying...there was no flash of a bulb out there!

ANN: I guess you dont know so much about photog'aphy as I do. The bulb on this camera was what they calls a ~~infrarrrad~~ infraw-red,or "black-out" bulb that dont show no flash... you can ask any good photgg'apher about em. They make pitchures come out fine...look at this one.

BONNIE: (PAUSE...TENSE,TERRIFIED) I— Where's the negative of this?

ANN: I got it home— in a safe place. And it's for sale.

BONNIE: How— how much?

ANN: What's it worth to you?

BONNIE: I— a thousand dollars.

ANN: It's cheap at twenty.

BONNIE: I- I'm only a piano teacher...I haven't—

ANN: (QUIETLY,DEFINITELY) Twenty thousand.

BONNIE: (PAUSE) Alright. I'll have to get the money from a- a safety deposit vault...the banks are closed—

ANN: Tomorrow will be okay. (PAUSE,CASUALLY) Why did you shoot that guy,Miss Jarson?

BONNIE: That doesn't concern you.

ANN: No...but I got a womanly curiosity.

BONNIE: You know too much,as it is...bring that negative here in the morning and get your money.

ANN: I never wind-up deals of this kind in- a client's house... it might be dangerous. Suppose you come to my joint.

BONNIE: Where you could have a witness planted,so you could go on blackmailing me? Oh,no!

ANN: Okay. I got a nice ottomobile that a folla— gave me. We'll be alone in it...I'll call for you in the mornin',~~xxiii~~ drive you to the bank and we'll make our little exchange.

BONNIE: (SLOWLY, THOUGHTFULLY) Suppose we go in my car...and I'll pick you up at the corner of 12th and Main at 9 o'clock— tomorrow night.

ANN: Okay. So long, Miss Jarson.

BONNIE: Goodbye— Miss Reilly.

ANN: You can call me— Annie.

MUSIC: BRIDGE

SOUND: AUTOMOBILE...HOLD UNDER (NO STREET EFFECTS!)

ANN: This is a bee-ootiful sports roadster you got, Miss Jarson. Y'know, my car is a sports roadster, too— only not so nice.

BONNIE: (SHORTLY) Really?

ANN: Uh huh. (PAUSE) Why you drivin' way out here on this lonesome road?

BONNIE: You said you wouldn't give me that negative until I satisfied your "womanly curiosity" about why Mr. Ashton— died. I want to be very sure that no one but you hears what I say.

ANN: Okay. (A LIGHT CHUCKLE) And you wont run no risk tellin' me...with my repitation among the cops, no one'd believe anything I said— without that negative to back it up.

SOUND: CAR BRAKED...CUT MOTOR AT *

BONNIE: (GRIMLY) No, I'll take no risk. We'll stop here.

ANN: You sure picked a deeserted spot. (*)

BONNIE: Now give me that negative.

ANN: Story first...negative second. And you know I've got it in my purse...I showed it to you 'fore I got in your car— holdin' it carsful so's you wouldn't grab it b'fore I got paid. Not, y'understand, that I dont trust ya.

BONNIE: (SOFTLY) You'll get paid.

ANN: Now let's have the low-down.

BONNIE: Alright...I'll rather enjoy giving it to you.

ANN: Sure you will. When a gal- or a guy, either! -pulls somethin' smart, it's hard to keep it all to theirselfs...I've done a couple jobs I'd like to tell someone about— if I had someone safe to talk to, like I'm safe for you.

BONNIE: (PAUSE, RELISHING THE CONFESSION) Hal Ashton was in love with me...Annie.

ANN: He was? And you engaged to his partner.

BONNIE: The only reason I became engaged to Dilwell was that he had more money than any other man who'd asked me to marry him. I'd never had money...I wanted money. But I didn't want Dilwell to go with it. He introduced me to Ashton. (A SOFT CHUCKLE) I can wind most men around mah little finger if I get the chance—

ANN: (ADMIRINGLY) That bee-eutiful southern talk you got.

BONNIE: It helps. I talked Ashton into stealin' money from the firm and turnin' it over to me...I promised to run away with him when he got $100,000. He got it...and I got it. Then I had to get rid of him...and Dilwell, too. I put Ashton up to pickin' a fight with Dilwell on that schooner, to fire some shots that would attract attention, and to get himself thrown overboard. I was to be where I was at just that time— as an "accidental witness" who would testify that Ashton was drowned.

ANN: Then he was to swim away in the dark, hide out...and, later, you two would get together with the dough?

BONNIE: That was the plan...as Ashton understood it. But I put two bullets through his head.

ANN: Why did you first say it was Dilwell who got shot and drowned?

BONNIE: He was mah fiancé...if I told folks I'd seen him commit

(CONT'D)

BONNIE: (cont'd) a murder, some'd say I was a kind of Judas. (SINCERELY) I was thinkin' of mah reputation!

ANN: (PAUSE) Oh. (PAUSE) But you got the murder on the record ...you'd nailed the guy who was alive for it.

BONNIE: That's right...and when everybody knew he was Dilwell, I'd have to stick by what I said at first— only changin' the names. (PAUSE, SOFTLY) Now give me that negative.

ANN: Okay. (PAUSE) Here it is— Hey!!— you got nor right to garb it before you give me—!!

BONNIE: (ACCENT COMPLETELY ABANDONED...GRIMLY) Here's what I'm going to give you.

ANN: (AFRAID) Dont point that gunn at me!

BONNIE: It's the same gun that killed Ashton...and it's going to kill you!

ANN: No—!!

BONNIE: Open that door and get out of this car...I dont want your blood on its upholstery!

ANN: Miss Jarson—!

BONNIE: Do as I say! (RAPIDLY) You little fool— did you think I'd tell you what I have and then let you live?? Now that I have this negative, no one in the world will have anything on me! Open that door and— (A SHARP CRY) Ahh—!!

CASEY: Thanks for the gun, Miss Jarson!

BONNIE: Casey—???

ANN: (GRATEFULLY) Oh, Casey— I was afraid you wouldn't get that rumble seat open in time...or that she'd hear you open it!

BONNIE: He's been hiding in that closed rumble seat???

CASEY: Yes, Miss Jarson. Your roadster has a fine, large rear compartment. But I was getting pretty cramped...you see, the batteries for the recording machine took up quite a little room.

BONNIE: (TERRIFIED) Recording machine??

CASEY: Uh huh...every word you've said is on a nice wax record that'll sound swell in court. And the bullets taken from Ashton's head will match the barrel of this gun of your's.

BONNIE: No,no—! You cant turn me over to the police! (THE ACCENT, AND HEAVY) Ah'm a woman,Mistuh Casey...think of yo' sistuhs- of yo' mothuh! No gen'leman can hahm a woman.

ANN: (DRYLY) Casey,she's got back her Virginnie dialect.

CASEY: You're a woman,Miss Jarson,but you aint no lady...and I dont wind easily around a little finger. Move over from that wheel...I'm driving this car to Headquarters. And will I put Logan in the squirrel cage!

MUSIC: BRIDGE

SOUND: BAR ROOM EFFECTS...PIANO BEHIND

ETH: But,Casey— how did you get inta that dame's car and get that recordin' equipment inta it?

CASEY: That was easy,Ethelbert. She kept the bus in a public garage ...I got acquainted with the night man and,after I bought him a couple bottles of good rye,I had the run of the place. What wasn't easy was being cooped up in that rear compartment so long. (PAINFULLY) My joints are still stiff.

ANN: Give him a little more oil for the joints,Ethelbert.

CASEY: You have swell ideas,Ann. And a bigger glassful,Ethelbert.

ETH: Wait a minute! I wanta get all of this story. Why did you work the pay-off in a ottomobile? Wouldn't it abeen easier if Miss Williams had loored this Jarson dame to a room where there was a dictaphone set-up?

CASEY: She'd have been suspicious in a room...she wouldn't have talked,as she did,and we had to have a confession. In a car— and her own car —she felt safe...and I'd already found out that she had a sports roadster with plenty of hide-away space.

ANN: (SIGHS) I'm glad it's over. I was only a make-believe blackmailer,but— well,next to people like Bonnie Jarson, a blackmailer is the lowest thing on earth.

ETH: You saved a innocent guy from goin' to the chair,Miss Williams...and,as my sister,Edna,says— quote: "In a good cause,a person may stoop lower than a worm and still be taller than a gi-raffe."

CASEY: Unquote and give me that cild.

ANN: To get his stiff joints in order,Ethelbert.

ETH: Hmm...I'd say: "To get stiff— period."

MUSIC: UP FOR FINISH

— THE END —

by:

Alonzo Deen Cole